

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 03648 242051Z
ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-02 TRSE-00
H-02 INR-10 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
NSF-02 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-20 /167 W

-----105194 250608Z /15

R 242040Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO USMISSION GENEVA
SECSTATE WASHDC 7171
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS PANAMA 03648

GENEVA FOR WINSTON

REF: STATE 070173

SUMMARY:

PRESS COVERAGE IN PANAMA OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE
LOS CONFERENCE WAS PRACTICALLY NONEXISTENT. HOWEVER, THE
QUESTION OF TERRITORIAL SEA LIMITS HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT
OF COMMENTARY. END SUMMARY.

1. OTHER THAN BRIEF RADIO SPOTS REPORTING THE EXISTENCE
OF THE LOS CONFERENCE, THE ONLY MENTION OF IT WAS A MAY 14
ARTICLE IN "LA ESTRELLA" BY VENEZUELAN COLUMNIST AND
POLITICIAN CARLOS CANACHE MATA ENTITLED, "THE LAW OF THE
SEAS CONFERENCE: NEW COLONIALISM". IN IT, CANACHE
DEPICTED "THE GREAT IMPERIAL CENTERS" AS "COLONIZING THE
SEA" THROUGH THEIR DESIRE TO EXPLOIT DEEP SEABED RESOURCES
FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT AT THE EXPENSE OF THE WEAK, BACKWARD
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COUNTRIES.

2. WITHOUT REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO THE LOS CONFERENCE,
"MATUTINO" COLUMNIST RICARDO LINCE RAN TWO COLUMNS RECENTLY
ON THE ISSUE OF TERRITORIAL SEAS LIMITS AND EXPLOITATION OF
THE SEABED. HIS MAY 16 COLUMN, WHICH WAS QUOTED IN
GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED "LA CRITICA" THE FOLLOWING DAY,

CALLED FOR PANAMA'S FULLY SUPPORT FOR COSTA RICA'S CLAIM TO A 200-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA LIMIT, FOR PROTECTION OF COSTA RICA'S FISHING RESOURCES FROM THE "NORTH AMERICAN TUNA PIRATES", AND FOR REFORM (UNSPECIFIED) OF THE LAW OF THE SEAS ON THOSE TWO POINTS. IN HIS MAY 22 COLUMN, LINCE PRE-DICTED THAT COSTA RICAN PRESIDENT CARAZO WOULD BRING UP THE SUBJECT OF THE 200-MILE LIMIT WHICH HE SEES PRESIDENT CARTER IN PANAMA IN JUNE. LAMENTING THE ATTITUDE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND U.S. CONGRESS ON THIS ISSUE, HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING IT IS "JUST" THAT COASTAL NATIONS HAVE A PART IN THE WEALTH OF THE DEPP SEABED, AS THE GREAT POWERS EXPLOIT IT BEYOND "ACCEPTABLE LIMITS".

3. AT THE INAUGURATION OF A MEETING OF THE WESTERN CENTRAL ATLANTIC FISHERIES COMMISSION, COMMERCE MINISTER JULIO E. SOSA, SPEAKING FOR THE GOP, REAFFIRMED PANAMA'S CLAIM TO A 200-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA LIMIT, AND EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING AND EXPLOITING THE RESOURCES OF THE SEA FOR THE JOINT BENEFIT OF LDC'S.

4. IN A JOINT DECLARATION ISSUED BY GEN. TORRIJOS AND PRESIDENT CARAZO OF COSTA RICA FOLLOWING THEIR MEETING OF MAY 22, THEY AGREED:

--TO INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS ON JULY 16 FOR A TREATY DEFINING THE MARINE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN PANAMA AND COSTA RICA; AND
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--TO FORM A COMMITTEE TO PROMOTE COOPERATION AMONG SEVERAL COUNTRIES IN THE AREA TO PROTECT AND MAKE MORE RATIONAL USE OF THEIR TUNA RESOURCES. JORDEN

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